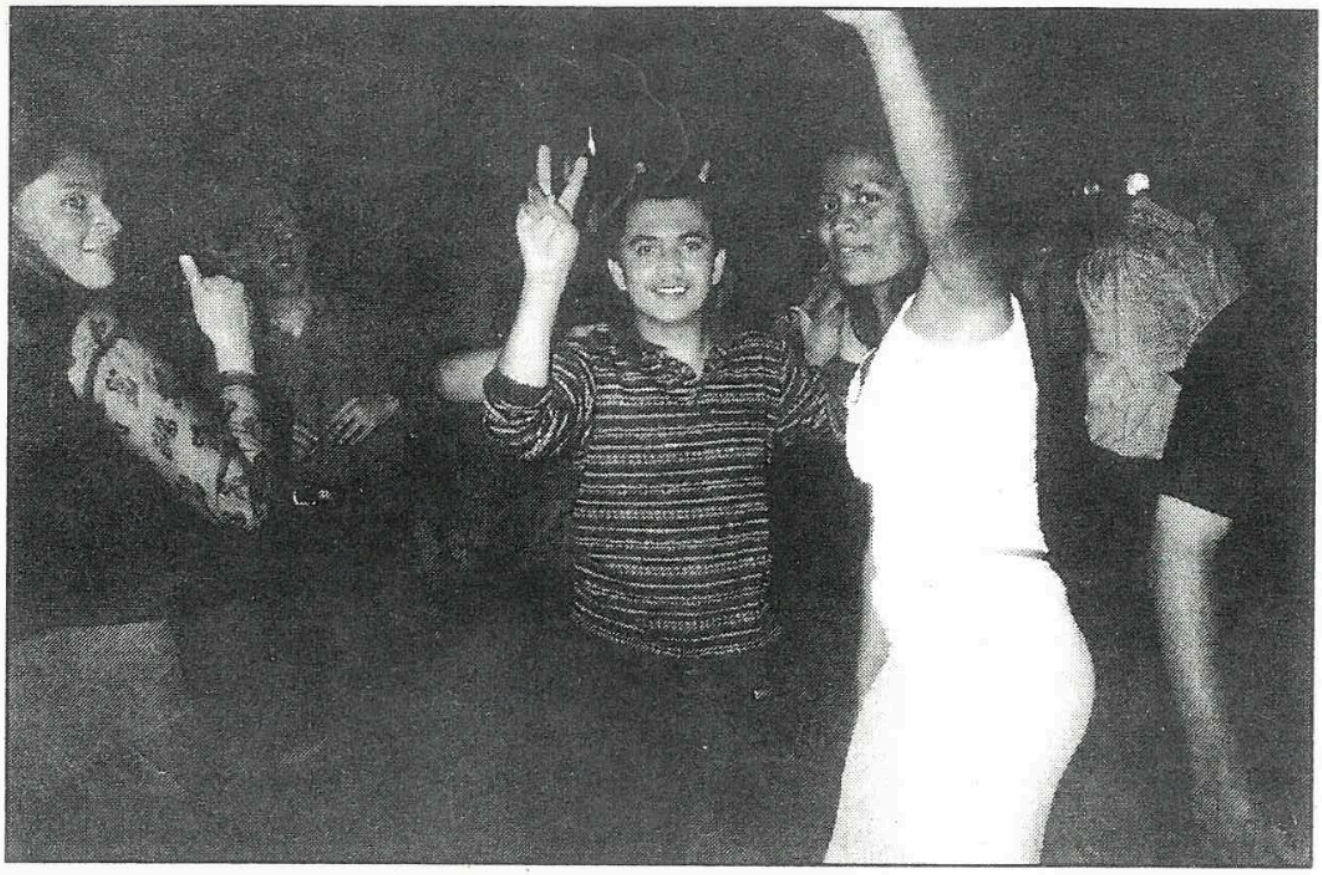
Class of 2000



Robert Camacho, center, shows some moves on the dance floor during the Spanish Club's end-of-the-year dance. Camacho is president of the club.

American Dreamer

Robert Camacho came a long way in four years

By Liliana Morales
Staff writer

Relocating to a new country is difficult for anybody, but imagine going to a new school and not knowing how to read or write in English. This is what Robert Camacho had to get accustomed to.

Camacho and his family decided to leave Mexico and start a new life, hoping for new opportunities in the United States. Camacho came to CI as a freshman at the age of 15 without knowing how to speak any English.

"It was very difficult," said Camacho. "My teachers expected me to do a computer project and I didn't know anything about computers."

Camacho started off with English 101. Now, as a graduating senior, he is taking English 4.

Camacho's greatest inspiration was Dr. Robert Serros, a CI teacher who passed away two years ago.

"He always gave me advice and encouraged me to do my best," said Camacho. "I will never forget how much he has inspired me."

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With the help of Zeke Jaquez, Camacho entered the migrant program and went to many university tours. Little by little he started to understand the school system.

Camacho is not only a CSF member, he is also president of the Spanish Club and Mariachi program.

He also joined Aspire, a tutoring program that helps students with schoolwork. The group meets every Saturday.

"Aspire has helped me a lot," he said. "It has improved my school skills, helping me earn good grades."

Camacho works after school in the office. He plans to attend Oxnard College for two years and then transfer to Cal Poly.

Camacho's plan is to become an architect. This has become his "American Dream," says Camacho. Watching people live in their own houses and hoping he one day has one has become one of his goals in life and also his greatest inspiration.

"Robert is a very flamboyant person," said Imelda Blanc, Spanish Club advisor. "He's very simple, caring and I have very high hopes for him in the future."

Camacho hopes to one day give back to his community as his community has given to him.

"America has a better life for all Latinos," he said. "It all depends on whether one takes advantage of the opportunities or leaves them. The choice is all yours."